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Over 90 Great Lakes Caucus Legislators Urge Rejection of Waukesha's Water Diversion Plan
Bipartisan group of legislators from across the Great Lakes Basin urge rejection of inadequate proposal

Racine, WI — Yesterday, over ninety members of the Great Lakes Legislative Caucus, a non-partisan, binational group of legislators from eight Great lakes states and two Canadian provinces dedicated to protecting the Great Lakes, submitted a letter to the Regional Body of the Great Lakes Compact urging the Great Lakes governors to reject in its entirety the City of Waukesha's woefully inadequate proposal to divert water from Lake Michigan. Co-signers of the caucus letter include legislators from all eight Great Lakes states, Democrats and Republicans, progressives and conservatives.

During the 2015 Annual Meeting of the Great Lakes Legislative Caucus in Buffalo, New York, a nearly unanimous vote of caucus members adopted a resolution in opposition to the proposed Waukesha Water Diversion Plan. In February, the Executive Committee of the Great Lakes Legislative Caucus voted unanimously to circulate a letter opposing Waukesha's diversion plan.

"Citizens, policymakers, and stakeholders across the Great Lakes Basin recognize that Waukesha has not pursued reasonable drinking water alternatives to diverting water from the Great Lakes," said Representative Cory Mason (D-Racine), who is the GLLC Chairman. "Despite the many flaws in Waukesha's diversion plan revealed in state and regional public hearings, Waukesha has made no significant changes to its plan to alleviate these glaring deficiencies. There is a shared understanding that we need to get any proposed diversion right in order to retain the high standards established in the Compact. To ignore or diminish those standards in the first application would set a precedent that would threaten the ability of the Compact to protect the Great Lakes in the future," he added.

The Great Lakes Compact was signed into law by President George W. Bush on December 8, 2008 after years of careful deliberation on both the state and federal level. The City of Waukesha is applying for an exemption from the ban on diversions of Great Lakes water outside the Great Lakes Basin. Under the Great Lakes Compact, all eight of the Great Lakes States must unanimously agree to the proposed diversion.

"Waukesha's diversion proposal also fails protect the already impaired Root River, fails to conserve Great Lakes water resources, and is focused on future growth rather than current need. This proposal should be rejected in its entirety by Great Lakes governors and premiers," Rep. Mason concluded.

A copy of the GLLC letter opposing the diversion is attached.

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